

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VIENTI 08675 01 OF 02 260623Z

14

ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-10 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 NSCE-00 NSC-10 PM-03 DODE-00 SPC-03 OMB-01 L-02

PRS-01 DRC-01 /070 W

----- 090038

R 260505Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7099

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 VIENTIANE 8675

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, LA

SUBJECT: SOVIET AMBASSADOR ON CURRENT LAO
POLITICAL SITUATION

SUMMARY. SOVIET AMBASSADOR AFFIRMS THAT SOVIET POLICY
REMAINS RAPID IMPLEMENTATION OF LAO AGREEMENTS. HE
AGREES THAT SOUVANNA WANTS EARLY FORMATION OF COALITION
GOVERNMENT AND THAT LPF ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR DELAY.
HOWEVER, LPF HEAD TO JCIA TOLD SOVIET AMBASSADOR THAT
LPF WOULD CHANGE ITS TACTICS IN NEAR FUTURE AND WOULD
AGREE TO DISCUSSING SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH RLG NEUTRALIZATION
OF TWO LAO CAPITALS AND FORMATION OF COALITION GOVERNMENT.
SOVIET AMBASSADOR PLANS TO FLY TO SAM NEUA EARLY IN THE
NEW YEAR TO OBTAIN ON THE SPOT EVALUATION OF WHAT CAN
BE DONE TO SPEED UP FORMATION OF COALITION GOVERNMENT.
HE THINKS PEKING IS ALSO COMMITTEED TO SUPPORTING SOUVANNA'S
POLICY AND NOTED WITHDRAWAL OF SOME CHINESE WEAPONS AND
MEN FROM CHINESE ROAD NETWORK IN NORTHERN LAOS. SOVIET
AMBASSADOR STRESSED THAT LAO SETTLEMENT SHOULD BE KEPT
SEPARATE FORM COMPLICATED CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM PROBLEMS.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VIENTI 08675 01 OF 02 260623Z

END SUMMARY

1. SOVIET AMBASSADOR VDOVINE, WHO RETURNED TO VIENTIANE MIDDLE OF DECEMBER FROM HOME LEAVE, CALLED ON ME DECEMBER 24 TO OBTAIN UP DATE OF LAO POLITICAL SITUATION SINCE HIS DEPARTURE IN SEPTEMBER. VDOVINE HAD MADE SIMILAR CALLS ON OTHER AMBASSADORS EARLIER IN THE WEEK.

2. VDOVINE SAID HE FIRST WISHED TELL AMERICAN EMBASSY HOW PLEASED MOSCOW IS WITH LAO SOLUTION NEGOTIATED LAST SEPTEMBER. SECONDLY, AS A RESULT OF HIS CONSULTATION IN THE SOVIET FOREIGN OFFICE HE CAN STATE UNEQUIVOCALLY THAT SOVIET POLICY REMAINS EARLY IMPLEMENTATION OF LAO AGREEMENTS NEGOTIATED IN 1973. HE THEN NOTED THAT 3-1/2 MONTHS HAD PASSED SINCE SIGNING OF LAO PROTOCOL AND FORMATION OF COALITION GOVERNMENT WAS NOWHERE IN SIGHT. HE ASKED HOW I EXPLAINED THIS DELAY.

3. I REPLIED THAT IN MY OPINION DELAY IS PATHET LAOS'S DOING. IT IS PATHET LAO WHO ARE SETTING SLOW PACE IN THE JCIA DISCUSSIONS. ON THE BASIS OF MY TALKS WITH SOUVANNA, I COULD ASSURE HIM THAT PRIME MINISTER HAD HOPED FOR EARLY FORMATION COALITION GOVERNMENT AND THAT HE DEPLORED SLOW PACE IN IMPLEMENTING AGREEMENTS. HENCE I SAID IN MY OPINION LPF ARE RESPONSIBLE IN SLOWING DOWN THE MOMENTUM TOWARDS EARLY POLITICAL SOLUTION IN LAOS.

4. SOVIET AMBASSADOR ASKED WHY I THOUGHT LPF WERE MOVING SO SLOWLY. I REPLIED THAT HE SHOULD BE IN BETTER POSITION TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION THAN I, BUT NEVERTHELESS VOLUNTEERED WHAT I THOUGHT MIGHT BE REASONS FOR LPF TACTICS:

A. LPF ARE GENUINELY CONCERNED WITH THEIR SECURITY. THEY ARE THEREFORE DETERMINED TO WORK OUT EVERY MINUTE DETAIL ON THE NEUTRALIZATION OF LUANG PRABANG AND VIENTIANE BEFORE SENDING THEIR LEADERS TO VIENTIANE. WORKING OUT THESE DETAILS IS TIME CONSUMING BUT LPF WISH TO AVOID MISUNDERSTANDINGS LATER WHICH COULD JEOPARDIZE LIFE OF THEIR TOP OFFICIALS. HENCE, METICULOUS CARE IN SPELLING OUT EVERY ASPECT OF NEUTRALIZATION WILL AVOID FUTURE PROBLEMS AND SAVE TIME IN THE LONG RUN, ACCORDING TO CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 VIENTI 08675 01 OF 02 260623Z

THIS THESIS.

B. OTHER EXPLANATION IS THAT ANOTHER POWER (I.E. NORTH VIETNAM) IS OPPOSED FOR REASONS OF ITS OWN TO EARLY FORMATION OF LAO COALITION GOVERNMENT AND THEREFORE IS URING LPF TO MOVE SLOWLY. VDOVINE LISTENED INTENTLY AND AT THE END SUGGESTED THAT PERHAPS A COMBINATION OF BOTH EXPLANATIONS MIGHT BE

VALID. HE DID NOT DISPUTE THAT LPF IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SLOWDOWN IN POLITICAL PROGRESS DURING THE LAST THREE MONTHS.

5. SOVIET AMBASSADOR THEN ASKED ABOUT CHINESE INTENTIONS IN LAOS. HE INQUIRED WHETHER I HAD HEARD THAT CHINESE HAD REDUCED THE NUMBER OF WEAPONS GUARDING THE ROAD NETWORK IN NORTHERN LAOS AND THAT THEY HAD WITHDRAWN SOME OF THEIR MEN. I REPLIED THAT I ALSO HAD HEARD THAT SOME OF THE HEAVY ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS HAD BEEN REMOVED FROM LAOS. VDOVINE SAID THAT ON BASIS EVERYTHING HE KNOWS ABOUT PEKING'S INTENTIONS, HE CONCLUDES THAT PEKING IS SATISFIED WITH NEGOTIATED SOLUTION IN LAOS AND CHINESE ARE SUPPORTING SOUVANNA'S EFFORTS FOR EARLY FORMATION OF COALITION GOVERNMENT.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VIENTI 08675 02 OF 02 260612Z

14

ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-10 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 NSCE-00 NSC-10 PM-03 DODE-00 SPC-03 OMB-01

DRC-01 L-02 PRS-01 /070 W
----- 090016

R 260505Z DEC 73
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7100
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 VIENTIANE 8675

LIMDIS

6. VDOVINE THEN REVERTED TO MY ANALYSIS WHICH BLAMED LPF FOR LACK OF POLITICAL MOVEMENT IN LAOS. HE SAID THAT HE HAD RECENTLY TALKED TO SOTH PHETRASY, HEAD OF PATHET LAO DELEGATION TO JCIA, AFTER LATTER'S RETURN FROM SAM ENUA. SOTH HAD TOLD HIM THAT IN EARLY 1974 THE

PATHET LAO WOULD CHANGE THEIR TACTICS. SPECIFICALLY, SOTH SAID HE WOULD OFFER TO RLG DISCUSSING SIMULTANEOUSLY NEUTRALIZATION OF THE TWO CAPITALS AND FORMATION OF THE COALITION GOVERNMENT. THIS NEW TACTIC, VDOVINE SAID, COULD RESULT IN PROGRESS TOWARD FORMATION OF NEW GOVERNMENT. IN ANY CASE, SOVIET AMBASSADOR SIAD, NOW THAT HE IS BACK IN LAOS HE INTENDS "TO PUSH FOR THE RAPID IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENTS SO THAT LAOS CAN BECOME AN EXAMPLE FOR THE REST OF INDOCHINA. LAOS SHOULD NOT BE LINKED TO CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM WHOSE PROBLEMS ARE MUCH MORE COMPLEX." ON THIS OPTIMISTIC NOTE, VDOVINE WISHED ME MERRY CHRISTMAS.

7. PRIOR TO VDOVINE'S VISIT, BRITISH AMBASSADOR DAVIDSON HAD TOLD ME THAT VDOVINE HAD SURFACED WITH CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VIENTI 08675 02 OF 02 260612Z

HIM IDEA OF SOVIET AMBASSADOR GOING TO SAM NEUA TO FIND OUT ON THE SPOT WHAT IS HOLDING UP PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING SOLUTIONS NEGOTIATED BY THE TWO LAO PARTIES. VDOVINE SAID THAT PRIME MINISTER HAD URGED HIM TO TAKE INITIATIVE TO CONVINCE LPF OF PRIME MINISTER'S GOOD FAITH IN IMPLEMENTING PROTOCOL AND HIS DESIRE FOR EARLY FORMATION OF COALITION GOVERNMENT. VDOVINE THOUGHT THAT GOING TO SAM NEUA APPEARED TO HIM TO BE BEST WAY TO CARRY OUT PRIME MINISTER'S SUGGESTION. IN REPLY TO VDOVINE'S QUERY, DAVIDSON SAID THAT HE THOUGHT GOING TO SAM NEUA WAS GOOD IDEA. DAVIDSON EVEN INTRODUCED THOUGHT OF ACCOMPANYING SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN HIS CAPACITY AS THE OTHER CO-CHAIRMAN, BUT BACKED AWAY FROM IDEA BECAUSE IT MIGHT STIFLE LPF TALKING FREELY WITH VDOVINE.

8. BRITISH AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT SOVIET COLLEAGUE HAD QUESTIONED HIM AT LENGTH AND IN DEPTH ON AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD LAOS. SPECIFICALLY, VDOVINE ASKED DAVIDSON SEVERAL TIMES WHETHER US ATTITUDE HAD CHANGED FROM WHAT IT WAS EARLIER IN THE SUMMER WHEN US HAD FACILITATED AGREEMENT ON PROTOCOL BY LAO PARTIES. BRITISH AMBASSADOR ASSURED SOVIET COLLEAGUE THAT TO THE BEST OF HIS KNOWLEDGE, THERE HAD BEEN NO CHANGE IN US POLICY AND THAT US REMAINED COMMITTED TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLITICAL-MILITARY SOLUTION ARRIVED AT DURING 1973. DEAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COALITION GOVERNMENT, AMBASSADORS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, COMMUNIST FRONT ORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: thigpegh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973VIENTI08675
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973126/aaaaaev.tel
Line Count: 216
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: thigpegh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27-Sep-2001 by martinml>; APPROVED <29-Nov-2001 by thigpegh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET AMBASSADOR ON CURRENT LAO POLITICAL SITUATION
TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, LA, UR, LPF
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005